09-985736

NPL Dialog Search 11/03/05

```
rying 31060000009999...Open

DIALOG INFORMATION SERVICES
PLEASE LOGON:
 ******** HHHHHHHH SSSSSSSS? ### Status: Signing onto Dialog ********
ENTER PASSWORD:
 ******** HHHHHHHH SSSSSSSS?  ********
### Status: Login successfulWelcome to DIALOG

Dialog level 05.08.03D

Last logoff:  02nov05 14:09:23
Logon file405 03nov05 16:34:45
           *** ANNOUNCEMENT ***
                  ***
--UPDATED: Important Notice to Freelance Authors--
See HELP FREELANCE for more information
                  ***
NEW FILES RELEASED
***Inspec (File 202)
***Physical Education Index (File 138)
***Computer and Information Systems Abstracts (File 56)
***Electronics and Communications Abstracts (File 57)
***Solid State and Superconductivity Abstracts (File 68)
***ANTE: Abstracts in New Technologies (File 60)
                  ***
RELOADS COMPLETED
*** The 2005 reload of the CLAIMS files (Files 340, 341, 942)
is now available online.

RESUMED UPDATING
***ERIC (File 1)
                  ***
Chemical Structure Searching now available in Prous Science Drug
Data Report (F452), Prous Science Drugs of the Future (F453),
IMS R&D Focus (F445/955), Pharmaprojects (F128/928), Beilstein
Facts (F390), and Derwent Chemistry Resource (F355).
                  ***
     >>> Enter BEGIN HOMEBASE for Dialog Announcements <<<
     >>>    of new databases, price changes, etc.      <<<
                  ****
FTXTCOR is set ON as an alias for 15, 9, 810, 275, 476, 610, 275, 476,
624,
636, 621, 613, 813, 16, 160, 634, 148, 20
NFTXTCOR is set ON as an alias for 77, 35, 583, 65, 2, 233, 474, 475,
99,
348,349,347
* * *
SYSTEM:HOME
Cost is in DialUnits
Menu System II: D2 version 1.7.9 term=ASCII
                     *** DIALOG HOMEBASE(SM) Main Menu ***
```

Information:
1. Announcements (new files, reloads, etc.)
2. Database, Rates, & Command Descriptions
3. Help in Choosing Databases for Your Topic
4. Customer Services (telephone assistance, training, seminars,
etc.)
5. Product Descriptions

Connections:
6. DIALOG(R) Document Delivery
7. Data Star(R)

/H = Help /L = Logoff /NOMENU = Command Mode

Enter an option number to view information or to connect to an online
service. Enter a BEGIN command plus a file number to search a
database
(e.g., B1 for ERIC).
?

Terminal set to DLINK

*** DIALOG HOMEBASE(SM) Main Menu ***

Information:
1. Announcements (new files, reloads, etc.)
2. Database, Rates, & Command Descriptions
3. Help in Choosing Databases for Your Topic
4. Customer Services (telephone assistance, training, seminars,
etc.)
5. Product Descriptions

Connections:
6. DIALOG(R) Document Delivery
7. Data Star(R)

/H = Help /L = Logoff /NOMENU = Command Mode

Enter an option number to view information or to connect to an online
service. Enter a BEGIN command plus a file number to search a
database
(e.g., B1 for ERIC).
? b ftxtcor nftxtcor

>>> 77 does not exist
>>> 233 does not exist
>>>2 of the specified files are not available
03nov05 16:35:07 User242899 Session D478.1
$0.00 0.225 DialUnits FileHomeBase
$0.00 Estimated cost FileHomeBase
$0.10 TELNET
$0.10 Estimated cost this search

```
     $0.10  Estimated total session cost   0.225 DialUnits


SYSTEM:OS  - DIALOG OneSearch
  File  15:ABI/Inform(R) 1971-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 ProQuest Info&Learning
  File   9:Business & Industry(R) Jul/1994-2005/Nov 02
         (c) 2005  The Gale Group
  File 810:Business Wire 1986-1999/Feb 28
         (c) 1999 Business Wire
  File 275:Gale Group Computer DB(TM) 1983-2005/Nov 02
         (c) 2005 The Gale Group
  File 476:Financial Times Fulltext 1982-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 Financial Times Ltd
  File 610:Business Wire 1999-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 Business Wire.
*File 610: File 610 now contains data from 3/99 forward.
Archive data (1986-2/99) is available in File 810.
  File 624:McGraw-Hill Publications 1985-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 McGraw-Hill Co. Inc
*File 624: Homeland Security & Defense and 9 Platt energy journals
added
Please see HELP NEWS624 for more
  File 636:Gale Group Newsletter DB(TM) 1987-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 The Gale Group
  File 621:Gale Group New Prod.Annou.(R) 1985-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 The Gale Group
  File 613:PR Newswire 1999-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 PR Newswire Association Inc
*File 613: File 613 now contains data from 5/99 forward.
Archive data (1987-4/99) is available in File 813.
  File 813:PR Newswire 1987-1999/Apr 30
         (c) 1999 PR Newswire Association Inc
  File  16:Gale Group PROMT(R) 1990-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 The Gale Group
  File 160:Gale Group PROMT(R) 1972-1989
         (c) 1999 The Gale Group
  File 634:San Jose Mercury  Jun 1985-2005/Nov 02
         (c) 2005 San Jose Mercury News
  File 148:Gale Group Trade & Industry DB 1976-2005/Nov 03
         (c)2005 The Gale Group
  File  20:Dialog Global Reporter 1997-2005/Nov 03
         (c) 2005 Dialog
  File  35:Dissertation Abs Online 1861-2005/Oct
         (c) 2005 ProQuest Info&Learning
  File 583:Gale Group Globalbase(TM) 1986-2002/Dec 13
         (c) 2002 The Gale Group
*File 583: This file is no longer updating as of 12-13-2002.
  File  65:Inside Conferences 1993-2005/Oct W5
         (c) 2005 BLDSC all rts. reserv.
  File   2:INSPEC 1898-2005/Oct W4
         (c) 2005 Institution of Electrical Engineers
*File   2: Archive data back to 1898 has been added to File 2.
  File 474:New York Times Abs 1969-2005/Nov 02
         (c) 2005 The New York Times
  File 475:Wall Street Journal Abs 1973-2005/Nov 02
         (c) 2005 The New York Times
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  File  99:Wilson Appl. Sci & Tech Abs 1983-2005/Sep
         (c) 2005 The HW Wilson Co.
  File 348:EUROPEAN PATENTS 1978-2005/Oct W04
         (c) 2005 European Patent Office
  File 349:PCT FULLTEXT 1979-2005/UB=20051027,UT=20051020
         (c) 2005 WIPO/Univentio
  File 347:JAPIO Nov 1976-2005/Jul(Updated 051102)
         (c) 2005 JPO & JAPIO

      Set  Items  Description
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? s  (consumers or buyers) (s) celebrities (s) (merchandise or
fashion???? or apparel or clothing)
Processing
Processed  20 of  26 files ...
Completed processing all files
         3752207  CONSUMERS
         1515361  BUYERS
          211332  CELEBRITIES
          833526  MERCHANDISE
         2200146  FASHION????
          864662  APPAREL
          924709  CLOTHING
      S1     707  (CONSUMERS OR BUYERS) (S) CELEBRITIES (S)
(MERCHANDISE OR
                  FASHION???? OR APPAREL OR CLOTHING)
? s s1 and (celebrities (10n) (profile or preferences))
             707  S1
          211332  CELEBRITIES
         2180150  PROFILE
          373364  PREFERENCES
            2913  CELEBRITIES(10N)(PROFILE OR PREFERENCES)
      S2      23  S1 AND (CELEBRITIES (10N) (PROFILE OR PREFERENCES))
? s s2 and py<2001
Processing
Processed  10 of  26 files ...
Processing
Processed  20 of  26 files ...
Processing
Completed processing all files
              23  S2
        74027838  PY<2001
      S3       9  S2 AND PY<2001
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>>>Duplicate detection is not supported for File 349.
>>>Duplicate detection is not supported for File 347.

>>>Records from unsupported files will be retained in the RD set.
...completed examining records
      S4       7  RD S3 (unique items)
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4/7,K/1   (Item 1 from file: 15)

DIALOG(R)File 15:ABI/Inform(R)

01806257 04-57248

Professional sports leagues: Marketing mix mayhem

Burton, Rick; Howard, Dennis

Marketing Management v8n1 PP: 36-46 Spring 1999 ISSN: 1061-3846
JRNL CODE: MMA
DOC TYPE: Journal article LANGUAGE: English LENGTH: 11 Pages
WORD COUNT: 5735

ABSTRACT: Evidence shows that over the past several years, professional sports' appeal to American consumers has been on the decline. Product life
cycle analysis indicates that all 4 of the North American "big leagues" have reached the late maturity or decline stage of development. Live attendance and television ratings have fallen across the major sports leagues. Additionally, there is a growing economic disconnect (notably in
the area of ticket prices) between professional sports tems and most Americans. It is imperative that the marketing managers of these teams and
leagues recognize times and consumers have changed and adopt new strategies
to compete more effectively in an increasingly glutted information/entertainment economy.

TEXT: Headnote:
If they don't change the marketing of professional sports leagues soon, will anyone care?

(Photograph Omitted)

Unless you've been trekking in Nepal for the last nine months, you know that a nasty player lockout cancelled the first three months of the 19981999 basketball season (including the 1999 NBA All-Star Game in Philadelphia). On top of that, in January, the NBA's premier player, Michael Jordan, confirmed his intention to retire.

That means if you are an NBA executive, you'll spend the end of the millennium dealing with an enormous marketing challenge-stemming fan apathy
and/or disappointment in the NBA's brand of professional basketball.

Meanwhile, on another professional sports league front, Rupert Murdoch's
Los Angeles Dodgers just signed free agent pitcher Kevin Brown to a six-year, $105 million contract. That's good news for Mr. Brown but it has
Major League Baseball (MLB) owners and executives publicly predicting serious problems in the very near future of "America's pastime."

These issues in professional sports are not new (we've had labor stoppages
and free agency since the mid '70s), but as the widely published woes of
major sports leagues increase, it prompts us to critically examine the current state of professional team sports in North America.

To do so, we thought it valuable to conduct our assessment by using a

traditional marketing evaluation framework, the product life cycle (PLC).
We began our appraisal by posing the following question: Just where are the NFL, NBA, and other major professional sports leagues on their respective product life lines?

We believe this question deserves attention from league marketers as well as league advertisers and sponsors. Why? Because, when the most relevant performance indicators are employed, it is clear that all four of the "big league" sports (NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL) have reached the late maturity, or decline, phase of the product life cycle.

While that is a bold statement, it is evidenced recently in the fact that each of the major sports leagues has suffered losses, in varying degrees, in terms of in-seat attendance and television viewership. First, however, an objective question: Should professional sports leagues be treated (i.e., marketed) as consumer products? Do entertainment properties, with their high **profile celebrities** , defy the traditional life cycle theory? These questions are certainly valid, particularly as professional sports leagues approach the new millennium.

Let's start with life cycles. Many marketing scholars have written about the product life cycle and debated its viability. As simplified by Peter and Donnelly in their textbook Marketing Management: Knowledge and Skills, PLC theory suggests that products are conceived and introduced before following a natural pattern of growth, maturity, decline, and ultimately, discontinuation.

The curve of the life cycle, which can chart sales volume and profit margin, or in the case of sports leagues, attendance and TV ratings, varies by industry, product, market, and technology. The curve also varies in length of time. Some industries rise and fall within 10 years. Others can exist for almost a century or more.

Interestingly, not everyone believes that all products follow a fixed path of "start low-grow higher-flatten-and drop off to die." In fact, in a 1976 Harvard Business Review article, Dhalla and Yuspeh advised readers to

"Forget the product life cycle concept!" They believed marketing strategies
built around a particular stage in a product's life "did more harm than good" and that obsession with product age (correlated to performance) often
persuaded executives to "neglect existing brands and place undue emphasis
on new products."

Admittedly, while researchers can show exceptions to the PLC model, many
product managers or team general managers live for the moment (i.e., the
fiscal year-end results and their annual review). Most marketers also believe that regardless of a product's past performance, new marketing strategies could make the next year better. This, in essence, is the marketer's creed: "I can influence the outcome and deliver desirable results."

As such, marketers point to examples where brands have successfully defied
the bell-shaped curve of the life cycle and talk about repositioning, reinvention, renewals, and resurgence.

Converse's Chuck Taylor basketball shoes went from athletic stardom in the
'50s and '60s (nearly every high school, college, and pro player wore Chucks) to fashion funkmeisters in the '70s and '80s. In the same way, Quaker Oats has gone from round barrel prominence (featuring that distinctive elderly white-haired Quaker) to a microwave staple that delivers contemporary movie tie-ins.
In Converse's case, the Chuck Taylor volume curve has gone up and down so
many times that brand managers at Converse's headquarters probably laugh in
the face of each new fashion craze. Next year, Chuck Taylors will no doubt
reemerge as a dynamic athletic product endorsed by Larry Bird or an NBA point guard who says all the right things about the lockout and the people
who can't guard him.

By contrast, Quaker Oats has never really come out of the maturity portion
of the curve. Like a scene from the television show ER, they're just flatlining along fitting the needs of the contemporary kitchen and modern
eat-on-the-run lifestyles. Age has not seemed to matter.

For professional sports leagues (involving multi-player teams), the life
cycle discussion is a little trickier. As shown in Exhibit 1, of the five
primary male professional sports leagues in North America, only one is younger than 50 and three are approaching 100. One league, MLB, is a graybeard of 97 that continues to dance around the edge of the downward slope.

Does age alone mandate that a product should decline? In it's simplest form, the answer is no. But skilled marketers know that as products age, consuming segments change and new growth strategies (not to mention contemporary sales and promotion tactics) must be employed.

Growth strategies, which all products need, are often condensed down to four key concepts:

Market Penetration.

Market Development.

Product Development.

Diversification

For sports leagues, growth in the last 20 years has probably been achieved through greater market penetration (increased media distribution and increased targeting of female and Hispanic fans) and market development (more expansion teams).

The greatest example of effective market penetration by a league may have been in the NFL where the league added national broadcast networks and significantly increased their profitability. In fact, rights fees paid by TV networks rose from approximately $656 million dollars in 1978 (among three networks) to $17.6 billion dollars split among four networks (down from five) for eight years (see Exhibit 2).

The product development strategies (i.e., a sport league's rules of play and the marketing communications perceptions of the product) have remained virtually unchanged. To be sure, leagues have added a designated hitter here, a two-point conversion there, or created brand extensions (i.e., the creation of the WNBA), but little has altered the essence of the game.

In fact, if there has been any change, it has probably been most visible in how the game is presented. New stadiums (designed as shopping malls or theme parks) might be the most contemporary form of product development or brand extension for professional sports.

An example of the stadium as product extension can be seen in Arizona where the Diamondbacks baseball team installed hot tubs just beyond the outfield wall where fans can sunbathe and take a dip while watching the game. Perhaps the game (the one on the field) is unchanged, but the real estate

experience has been enhanced.

The same can be said in Anaheim where Disney's ownership of the NHL's Mighty Ducks greatly altered the way a hockey game is now delivered. A giant Duck mascot descends from the rafters on wires to initiate an explosion of lights and sounds. The inclusion of twirling ice dancers and
fan-- friendly interactive promotional activities makes going to the game
akin to visiting Disneyland.

Still, in many people's minds, the professional sports product has changed
very little in the last 20 years, except perhaps to accentuate a wide range
of negatives.

Where leagues once built brand equities or created sustainable market advantages, professional sports leagues now regularly supply their primary
marketing agent (the media) with a withering barrage of salacious topics.

Consider the following: In the past five years, professional sports leagues
have suffered through player strikes (MLB, August, 1994; NHL, September,
1995), a player lockout (NBA, July, 1998), player free agency and salary
demands (all leagues, all the time), various player arrests (including the
assault of an NBA coach by his own player in December, 1997), rising ticket
prices (an annual custom), stadium referendums, franchise movement, and constant legal wrangling.

(Table Omitted)
Captioned as: EXHIBIT 1

EXHIBIT 2

The end result is that, rather than using growth strategies to build their
brands and stave off the effects of life cycle issues (i.e., age and product relevance, stagnant or static product attributes), the leagues have
had to deal with an almost constant defensive stance. That defensiveness is
now reflecting itself in negative consumer trends.

At this point, it is difficult to determine whether these recent declines
are the beginning of a long-term slide or just a momentary aberration in
what has been, with few notable exceptions (e.g., the 1994 baseball strike), a sustained period of growth and prosperity for professional sports in the United States. Based on available evidence, it is highly

plausible to suggest we are seeing the start of a long-term erosion scenario (suggested in the PLC model).

Therefore, we believe it is imperative that each league take a very close look at its current position in the marketplace and determine its relative health. More importantly, new marketing strategies to fit a late maturity life stage may be critical if preventative marketing measures are to do much good.

Said another way: the four clients the doctor has just seen-the NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL-are healthy now, but prime targets for a series of heart attacks. The leagues have all lived well (in the age of billion dollar broadcast contracts) but that "life in the fast lane" lifestyle has the potential to catch up with them.

The League's Declining Health

Falling Attendance

A majority of teams in the four biggest leagues reported flat or declining attendance in 1997-1998. Even MLB, which rode the Mark McGuire-Sammy Sosa home run duel to unprecedented levels of public interest, found 8 of 13 American League teams with fewer fans attending their games than in the previous two seasons. When you remove the expansion team (Tampa Bay Devil Rays) from the overall gate count, you find total American League attendance fell 6% during what many pundits claimed to be baseball's "comeback" season.

The August 31, 1998 issue of Sports Illustrated concluded that the McGuire phenomenon alone accounted for a combined increase in Cardinals' home and road attendance of almost 800,000. Aside from that fortuitous attendance spike, overall major league baseball gate figures were down 118,784 from 1997 for games not involving St. Louis.

Led by the World Champion Chicago Bulls, seven NBA teams reported filling their arenas to 100% capacity during the 1997-98 season. However, when you examined the attendance of the other 22 league franchises, you found a far different reality. Three-fourths of these other teams saw no improvement at the gate from the previous year. In fact, 11 showed substantial declines, including four teams with dropoffs greater than 10%.

Most dismaying was the fact that several of those teams reporting modest increases, like the Denver Nuggets and Los Angeles Clippers, finished the season with a third of their seating inventories unsold. As a whole, the NBA realized less than a 1 % increase at the gate from the previous season. It's no wonder that most analysts predict a long and difficult recovery for the league now that the recent work stoppage has been resolved.

On the ice, only 7 of the 26 teams comprising the NHL reported increased attendance in 19971998, while half the teams suffered moderate to severe losses. The NHL declines are particularly troubling for a league that depends on gate receipts for 60% of its total revenues. Attendance has eroded steadily over the past three years, with league-wide capacity figures falling from 93% in 1996-97 to 91% last season, to 88.7% through the first third of the current season. The continued decline into the 1998-99 season is particularly disconcerting given that the NHL faced no direct competition from the NBA during November, December, and January.

Even the venerable NFL with its limited inventory of just eight home games per season has reason to be concerned. During the 1998 season, 14 of the league's 30 teams showed no growth or slight to substantial (the St. Louis Rams were off 16.8%) slippage at the gate.

What may be more troubling is the rising report of "no-shows" (no longer reported by the league) in many NFL stadiums. An example is the Carolina Panthers, who, in only the third year of operation, have seen an average of more than 7,000 no-shows this season. That's a 317% increase over their inaugural 1996 season.

Honeymoon's Over

In fact, it appears that the "honeymoon" period that new teams or venues previously took for granted no longer has the sustaining impact it once did. Analysis through the late 1980s demonstrated that teams occupying brand-new venues could count on a three to five year "halo effect" when attendance levels would hold for several years despite poor and/or declining team performance.

Recent experience suggests fans are now much less patient (tolerant). The Portland Trail Blazers (NBA), Buffalo Sabres (NHL), and Jacksonville Jaguars (NFL) all showed appreciable declines in attendance shortly

after occupying new or substantially renovated venues. The Washington Wizards (NBA) saw ticket sales diminish as the season progressed during their first year in the new MCI Center.

Jerry Colangelo, owner of the Arizona Diamondbacks (MLB) explained the 20% drop in season ticket renewals, as his team headed into just its second season, with the comment, "Honeymoons just don't last as long as they used to."

Declining Ratings

Most league executives, particularly in the NFL and NBA, profess less concern about stagnant or sagging attendance, proclaiming that the typical fan is now a television fan. Certainly, more sports programming is available on free or cable television than ever before. And, with the emergence of regional sports networks to compete with ESPN's delivery of around-the-clock sports broadcasting, fans have unprecedented opportunities to watch their favorite teams.

Note should be made of the fact that the four major networks now devote an increased portion of their programming to sports (in excess of 2000 hours each year). Unfortunately, fewer consumers appear to be watching games involving teams from the NBA, NHL, MLB, or the NFL.

According to McGraw (1998), ratings for all four leagues have been sinking for the past decade. In fact, since 1987, MLB is down 30%, the NBA 14% and the NFL -22%. The NHL, while only on network television for a short period of that time, saw its ratings on Fox plummet last season.

At least two plausible explanations have been offered for the ratings decline. Some, like NFL President Neil Austrian, believe that the glut of entertainment options increasingly available to fans has diluted network numbers. There are more people watching sports on television, but they are watching it on a lot more channels

According to Austrian, "The sports fan has so many more choices now, but when you compare our ratings to the rest of network television, we are still delivering the numbers you can't find elsewhere." (McGraw, 1998, p. 43). To Austrian's credit, the NFL's 1998 ratings on Fox and CBS were considered impressive given early-season declines on those networks. As

of
early 1999, the NFL's approximate 25% household share (for regular season
games) is unmatched by all other domestic sports programming save a popular
Olympiad.

Nonetheless, there are storm clouds on the horizon. Harvey Araton (1998) in
the New York Times Magazine recently offered a more ominous explanation for
the various league rating declines. He suggested that working- and
middle-class families, the traditional bedrock fans of professional sports,
are gradually losing interest in watching major leagues games because they
can no longer afford to attend them.

The Economic Disconnect

There is ample evidence of the growing economic disconnect between
professional sports and most Americans. Exhibit 3 shows the steady and
substantial increase in the cost of attending games across all four leagues.
Using the Fan Cost Index (FCI) created by Team Marketing Report, which
estimates the average cost for a hypothetical family of four to attend a
professional team sports event, comparisons are provided for the major
leagues over a seven-year period. All of the price figures are adjusted to
1995 dollars to allow for "apples to apples" comparison. We then compared
the changes for 1991 to 1998 against the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for
that period.

(Table Omitted)

Captioned as: EXHIBIT 3

The results show the price of attendance rising two to four times that of
the rate of inflation. The NHL leads the way, with an 80% price increase
over the eight-year period. For a family of four to attend an NHL ($238.97)
or NFL ($243.34) game this season, it amounts to about 30% of an average
household's weekly earnings.

It is clear that attending a live major league sport experience is now
beyond the reach of a vast majority of the general population. According to
a recent report by the Sports Marketing Group, nine out of ten Americans
say ticket prices are so high that it is difficult for them to attend a
professional sporting event.

It is not surprising, then, to find data that documents the increasingly narrow demographics of those attending big-league games. Growing empirical evidence and opinion indicates middle-class and blue-collar fans have been pushed out of stadiums and arenas, replaced by more affluent spectators.

Roger Angell, a columnist for The New Yorker, recently proclaimed that "going to ballgames is becoming a perk of the new rich" (p. 9). Angell's claim is given credence by a recent report indicating that the household income of Washington, D.C. area residents attending Baltimore Orioles games averaged $87,500 (Fehr,1997). According to the most recent Census data, average household income of those residing in the Baltimore-DC area is around $53,000.

The most compelling evidence, however, for the gentrification of big-league sports is found in a 1996 study which appeared in American Demographics. The analysis found that adults with household incomes of $75,000 and above were 72% more likely to attend Major League Baseball games than those households with aggregate incomes less than $35,000.

When such a narrow segment of the market-- according to the latest U.S. Census, only 13.6% of households have incomes in excess of $75,000can afford to attend professional sporting events on a regular basis, it is not surprising to find consumer interest dissipating for both live and televised offerings of major league sports.

McGraw (1998) concluded in his recent appraisal of big league sports that the greatest danger facing professional sports was fan "apathy." As evidence for this assertion, he cited the 1998 Los Angeles Times poll in which almost two-thirds of respondents did not consider an NFL team in the Los Angeles area of any importance to them.

Prescription for Recovery

If the patients (the NFL, NBA, NHL, and MLB) have health-related issues, one of the challenges is to begin acknowledging the need for change (as in changing a patient's diet or workout schedule).

Leagues must recognize that times and consumers have changed. They must also get ready to employ new strategies to accommodate a culture that no longer looks like 1958 or 1975.

In the 1950s, Americans once enjoyed two primary sports leagues (baseball and the NFL) and three television networks. Today, however, the American entertainment economy features countless television channels (including cable and satellite), more than 40 professional sports organizations (see Exhibit 4) and new technologies like the VCR, television video cartridge games, computer CD-ROM games, and the Internet.

The marketing implication is that new life cycles are being started and many are at different stages of their development. The large, established leagues, while working from some economies of scale and enormous product awareness/familiarity are nonetheless fighting off numerous incursions from rapidly emerging sports properties. For example, the NBA must watch the relative success of the WNBA (their own new product), the Continental Basketball Association (CBA), the proposed (and much discussed) new Collegiate Professional Basketball League (CPBL), numerous international basketball leagues, and all other indoor sports leagues that utilize balls or pucks.

And leagues must watch sports with growing grass roots appeal (soccer) or youthful, participatory dynamics that make active involvement more affordable, accessible, or relevant.

This concept is brought into greater focus in Harry Dent Jr.'s book, The Roaring 2000s, which suggests that Americans, while happy to spend disposable income, are increasingly seeking customized products.

To wit, they don't want mass media and mass marketing strategies. They want individualized programming, apparel, and messages. That's a problem for mass mediums like television, which have been formatted to sell profitable advertising by targeting broad audiences with low common denominators (i.e., intelligence and entertainment sophistication). But it's not an issue for new mediums like the computer/Internet.

The digital television revolution has brought a promise of 500 channels and niche programming. Today, that remains a largely unproven promise. For the Internet, however, the technology available in 1999 offers a premise of mass customization. Television and professional sports leagues must understand and embrace that dynamic immediately. Granted, by 1998 all the leagues had colorful Web sites, but pursuit of users through this medium

(in 2000 and beyond) may require different trial tactics than those used
for television 40 years ago.

Dent also suggests that spending is tied (logically enough) to birth rates
and that the American economy will remain notably healthy until 2009 (the
peak spending year for "Baby Boomers"). If true, this suggests that the major leagues that were built or sustained on the birth wave of the late
1950s, now have less than 10 years to maximize market share before the financial wheels start to come off.

In short, what we are seeing in 1999 is a wealth of disposable income that
has arrived at the same time that a wealth of interactive entertainment/information options have become available.

This concept fits snugly with work done by MIT's Nicholas Negroponte who
suggested in his book "being digital" (1995) that in the digitized future,
computers will provide customized, intelligent interfaces that give consumers exactly what they want. This game for you, these highlights for
me.

One of Negroponte's wonderful musings is that the modern consumer will be
able to ask for and receive an interactive, video newspaper that provides
all of the specific information/entertainment desired. The question, then,
is whether that's good for professional sports or bad. The answer may depend on how leagues make themselves attractive and how they communicate
their benefits to an increasingly sophisticated world.

(Table Omitted)
Captioned as: EXHIBIT 4

As referenced earlier, ticket prices for professional sports are outpacing
the CPI which means that while the average individual gets a 3% cost of living increase annually, the cost of attending a professional sports event
is going up on average by more than 7%.

To top that off, leagues like the NFL are dealing with recent market shift
dynamics that has seen NFL teams go from Houston to Nashville or from Boston (the sixth largest U.S. market) to Hartford (#27).

This downsizing means there are currently no NFL teams in six of the top 25
Nielsen DMA's (Dominant Marketing Area) including Los Angeles (#2),

Houston (#11), Cleveland (#13), Sacramento (#20), Orlando (#22) and Portland. (#23).

In Cleveland's case, there will be a team there as of September, 1999, and the marketing plan will undoubtedly be quite interesting to dissect. That's because the Browns' new ownership group paid more than $530 million to re-enter this market. For their troubles, they will get to deal with annual rising overhead (in the form of player salaries), declining television ratings, advertiser and sponsor uncertainty, normal stadium depreciation, and potential fan disaffection if the new Browns are unable to win quickly and often.

Yet in spite of all the financial uncertainty, the value of professional sports franchises continue to appreciate at record rates. Nowhere is this more evident than in the NFL where the Washington Redskins were just sold for $780 million, shattering the previous high paid for the Browns. Interestingly, the difference is exactly the price Red McCombs paid to buy the Minnesota Vikings less than 12 months prior to the Redskins transaction.

The soaring appreciation values are primarily a function of supply and demand. With respect to the NFL, there are only 32 franchise slots. That means that from a strict business standpoint, paying nearly $800 million for membership in an exclusive owners' club makes up for the estimated 4% return on investment (ROI) per year. That's not great. In fact, it's pretty modest, but the psychic/ego benefits are huge.

Welcome to the professional sports world of the 21st century, a place where the challenge of marketing professional sports teams and leagues is highly visible, controlled by unique individuals, and getting much tougher. For many marketing professionals, the thought of directing a professional sports team's sales and marketing might seem like a dream job. Professional sports command constant media and consumer attention. In fact, entire sections of newspapers and programming segments on television are dedicated to informing and shaping target consumer images about professional sports.

Unlike traditional marketing categories (i.e., consumer product goods

or services), professional sports generate notable passions and loyalties. Cities even go so far as to suspend fiscal judgment in order to bring sports franchises to their municipalities. Despite all the hype and rhetoric, a case can be made that professional sports leagues are marketable brands that require sophisticated marketing plans and an understanding of how the product is perceived, received, and purchased. Awareness is generally not an issue but interest, trial, adoption, and retention/loyalty are. If a brand is in late maturity or the earliest stages of decline, then new uses, new product features, or new markets must be developed.

For sports leagues, that means the communications strategy of showing availability (network promotional announcements) or the use of advertising to differentiate the game ("I Love This Game" or "Feel the Power") may no longer represent the top priority. Instead, league marketers must employ strategies that can legitimately "alter the product, produce new uses for the product, or introduce new markets." The other choices are to drop the product (which, for a sports league, is unthinkable) or tolerate continued declines (Peter & Donnelly, 1995.)

To continue down the path of generating awareness, without communicating benefits and/or advantages, is folly. The leagues must have strategies that motivate involvement and deliver brand satisfaction.

For the majority of leagues this responsibility falls to either a league marketing arm (i.e., NFL Properties, NHL Enterprises, NBA Properties) or the local club marketing directors. The problem, in some cases, is that big money and big television coverage have lulled the patient to sleep and made it difficult for these marketers to generate increased consumer demand.

The leagues, networks, and players are making big money so it's hard to see the existing fan base slipping away and even harder to see the next wave of potential users making other entertainment choices.

That's why, in some respects, professional sports marketers have thankless jobs. Brand images for their leagues or teams have been either so fixed (i.e., greedy owners/selfish players) or stretched so thin that the brand equities are becoming parodies. If NIKE can take on a negative connotation

(to some **consumers**), be it driven by **fashion** , labor practices, or the **celebrities** signed, then so can a league.

In addition, there traditionally has been modest funding set aside for marketing the game/sport (nationally) or marketing the teams (locally). Yes, the leagues and teams have large revenue streams and high player or executive salaries. But traditionally, the marketing has been left to word-of-mouth, sponsor partnership, free media coverage, promotional television spots, and aggressive ticket sales. Very little has been available for marketers to use in changing perceptions of their league/team/game.

In simple terms, we have brand saturation (that is, images frequently presented, often with negative connotations) and minimal ability to fund product development or aggressive re-positionings. Granted, the NFL has worked hard to take their product to Europe (the World League of American Football) and the NHL stopped operating to showcase its players in the 1998 Olympics, but PLC strategies for mature products suggest these marketers must do more than that. Ultimately, they must determine their future growth trends and determine the amount they are willing to spend to maintain flat or declining market share.
In late maturity, short term ROI (marginal profit) usually declines if brands spend aggressively to hold a position in the marketplace. The reasoning for that investment is clear: optimize cash cow returns or, if an organization's portfolio allows, "make the brand attractive" for an impending sale. Exhibit 5 shows typically PLC strategies

In the late maturity stage, consumer brands frequently get into heavy trade allowances or significant consumer/sales promotions in order to encourage brand switching and brand conversion. In the decline phase, marketing strategies tend to call for minimal investment and minimal promotions. Prices are cut to reduce losses associated with inventory.

For the leagues discussed (NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB) it is critical that the commissioners look down the road to determine if a life cycle analysis is relevant and, if so, where their brands might fall on the curve. In an age of consolidation and mergers (i.e., Exxon/Mobil or MCI/WorldCom), is it possible that an entertainment company or media outlet might want to buy a league? Could one league wish to buy another? Should all the leagues actively pursue growth in China, Africa, South America, Europe, or the former Soviet Union where new markets and new users can easily be found?

In an interactive media age, does PLC theory suggest that the leagues must
act quickly to embrace new electronic distributions of their games? True
enough, NHL Ice is doing great things with IBM on computers (interactive
video and video highlights, see picture above) and NFL Enterprises is ahead
of the curve (and the other leagues) on satellite distribution (NFL Sunday
Ticket). But are these actions enough? How quickly is the market moving?

Could Virtual Reality technology represent the new way to market and grow
the NFL? Would it overcome some household concerns that traditional sports
have become too violent?

Given the growth of alternative sports and technology mediums and given the
aging of the free-spending Baby Boomers (who will soon start to shift their
spending and viewing habits in preparation for retirement and death), there
are now some very key marketing issues on the professional sports horizon.
These issues and early warning signals need to be heeded by the patients
(the leagues) before significant surgery is required.

(Table Omitted)

Captioned as: EXHIBIT 5

(Illustration Omitted)
Marketers for these leagues tend to be the best in the business (and they
can afford the best doctors) but the technologies of the new millennium and
the various consumption habits of a new generation (the Echo Boomers) may
be the nastiest curveball thrown yet.

Sidebar:

EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

Sidebar:

Evidence shows that over the past several years, professional sports appeal
to American consumers has been on the decline. Product life cycle analysis
indicates that all four of the North American "big leagues" have reached
the late maturity or decline stage of development. Live attendance and

television ratings have fallen across the major sports leagues. Additionally, there is a growing economic disconnect (notably in the area
of ticket prices) between professional sports teams and most Americans. It
is imperative that the marketing managers of these teams and leagues recognize times and consumers have changed and adopt new strategies to compete more effectively in an increasingly glutted information/entertainment economy.
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Author Affiliation:

About the Authors

Author Affiliation:

Rick Burton is director of the James H. Warsaw Sports Marketing Center in
the University of Oregon's Lundquist College of Business. He has conducted
research in numerous sports marketing areas including the development and
maintenance of professional sports leagues, sponsorships (see MARKETING MANAGEMENT, V7, N1, Spring 1998), and the growth of women's sports. Prior
to joining the University of Oregon, he served for three years as vice president of Performance Properties, the sports and entertainment marketing
division of Clarion Marketing in Greenwich, Conn. He consults nationally
and internationally for professional sports organizations such as the NFL,
NHL, Australian NBL, and the Hong Kong Olympic Committee.

Author Affiliation:

Dennis Howard is professor of sports marketing in the University of Oregon's Warsaw Sports Marketing Center. He is the former Head of the Graduate Program in Sport Management at The Ohio State University and is
considered one of the leading authorities on sports finance. His specialty
is stadium financing and economics. He has authored three books and close
to 100 articles in sport and leisure management/marketing publications. He
has worked as a consultant for the NFL.

Author Affiliation:

Authors' Note

Author Affiliation:

Paul Swangard, the Warsaw Sports Marketing Center's graduate teaching fellow at the University of Oregon, assisted greatly in the compilation of
facts, research, and insight.

...TEXT: leagues be treated (i.e., marketed) as consumer products? Do entertainment properties, with their high **profile** **celebrities** , defy the

traditional life cycle theory? These questions are certainly valid, particularly as professional sports...brand equities are becoming parodies.
If NIKE can take on a negative connotation (to some **consumers**), be it driven by **fashion** , labor practices, or the **celebrities** signed, then so
can a league.

In addition, there traditionally has been modest funding set...

4/7,K/2 (Item 2 from file: 15)
DIALOG(R)File 15:ABI/Inform(R)

00565588 91-39942
Flat-Footed: Ad Campaigns Try to Spark Sales as Sports Shoes Hit Plateau
Freeman, Laurie
Stores v73n8 PP: 67, 82 Aug 1991 ISSN: 0039-1867 JRNL CODE: STR
DOC TYPE: Journal article LANGUAGE: English LENGTH: 2 Pages
WORD COUNT: 998

ABSTRACT: During the mid to late 1980s, the athletic footwear market posted
double-digit growth. In 1990, the US market reached $11.9 billion, with
393 million pairs of shoes sold, only a 1% increase in units and a 10% gain
in dollars over the previous year. Industry experts say that sales have
hit a plateau. Footwear retailers agree that teenagers still drive the athletic footwear business and set the tempo as far as shoe **fashion** is
concerned. Retailers say that what really seems to drive sales of specific
shoes are advertising campaigns featuring top sports figures. Nike alone
spends more than $5 million on its series of commercials featuring Michael
Jordan and film director Spike Lee. For the majority of **consumers** , it is
not the performance of the shoe, but the image as presented by popular sports **celebrities** in television commercials that counts. Converse recently unveiled a $22 million ad campaign that features basketball stars
like Larry Bird and Magic Johnson.
TEXT: Like most young adults, Keiko Shimizu has more than one pair of athletic shoes. The 26-year-old Falls Church, Va., resident has a couple of
pairs of Reeboks for teaching aerobics, a pair for running, a pair of cross-trainers, and a some Keds for just hanging around. "Doesn't everyone?" she quips.

These days, the answer more often than not is yes. From the mid- to late-1980s, the athletic footwear market posted double-digit growth, fueled

by baby boomers taking up new sports such as aerobics, running and fitness walking.

In 1990, the U.S. market hit $11.9 billion with 393 million pairs of shoes sold, only a 1% increase in units and a 10% gain in dollars over the previous year. Sales, industry experts say, have hit a plateau.

"The overall athletic footwear market has reached a difficult point," notes Sebastian DiCasoli, director of marketing services for the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA).

According to the SGMA, 4 out of every 10 shoes sold in the U.S. are athletic-styled shoes. The amount of athletic footwear purchased for "sports usage only" remained at 9% in 1990, a figure consistent with previous levels, the association reported.

Yet sports and high- **profile** sports **celebrities** like Michael Jordan, Bo Jackson, Larry Bird and Magic Johnson certainly are the reason behind many purchases of specific brand name shoes, whether they are for active sporting activities or grocery shopping.

Footwear retailers agree that kids still drive the athletic footwear business and set the tempo as far as shoe fashion is concerned. They always want what's fresh, no matter if several pairs are piling up unworn in the closet.

"They'll have a very expensive Nike Air Command Force or Reebok Pump shoe for playing ball in or when they want to impress somebody," says Corey Simonson, men's shoe buyer, Chernin Shoes, Chicago. "Then they might have a less expensive Mike Cortez, a basic nylon running shoe, for knocking around in."

Robert Bridges, owner of two Athlete's Foot outlets in southern Maryland, notes that consumers in his area are not scaling back on the number of pairs of shoes they buy, but they are trying to get a better shoe for their money.
But what really seems to drive sales of specific shoes, retailers say, are campaigns featuring top sports figures.

"When you have personalities as large as Michael Jordan and Bo Jackson, there's no doubt about it," Bridges says. "That's what drives sales."

That most of the popular athletic footwear endorsers happen to be

African-American is a coincidence.

"We do not market by color at all, we market by specific sport," says Melinda Gable, Nike public relations manager.

"The issue of the black athlete is sort of accidental," agrees Ed Tapscott, client manager of the Teamsports division of Advantage International, Washington, D.C.

"Traditionally, the idea was you'd use a black athlete to market to the segment that happened to be African-American. What companies discovered was that these athletes have tremendous crossover appeal, with black athletes now used in advertising to the general population."

Nike alone spends more than $5 million on its series of commercials featuring Michael Jordan and film director Spike Lee as Mars Blackmon, urging kids to stay in school.

But it is just that kind of wide media exposure, as well as unflattering stories that inner-city youths were killing each other to own Air Jordans and other expensive shoes and apparel, that led to Operation PUSH's year-long national boycott of Nike.

The activist group contended that while the black community is Nike's primary U.S. market, the company did not employ enough black businesses as suppliers or hire enough black workers.

While retailers nationally say the boycott never resulted in much consumer backlash, Nike moved to diffuse the controversy by appointing to its board of directors John Thompson, the head basketball coach at Georgetown University.

Although Operation PUSH's attempted boycott fizzled, the issue was an emotional one for the athletes involved. For years there were complaints within the African-American community that black athletes did not have the endorsement opportunities their white counterparts did, says Tapscott. "And now that you have a few black athletes doing endorsements, they're thrust into a controversy that they're selling sneakers of violence, so to speak," Tapscott says. "It was unfair to put that type of pressure on an individual athlete."

With the boycott out of the headlines, Nike has resumed concentrating on selling shoes in a recessionary economy and on its ever-present market share battle with No. 2 Reebok International.

Reebok, with a 24% market share, in the last 18 months has been gaining on Nike's 30% share with the introduction of the Pump basketball shoe and most recently, the Blacktop basketball shoe. (The Pump, priced $95 to $110, now comes in nine varieties, including aerobics, golf and tennis. A baseball Pump, complete with cleats, is on the way.)

But for the majority of consumers, it's not the performance of the shoe, but the image as presented by popular sports celebrities in TV commercials that count.

"Michael Jordan is important, Bo Jackson is important, but Joe Montana (spokesman for L.A. Gear) is less important," says Chernin Shoes' Simonson.
"The Reebok Blacktop has been doing well because Reebok has done a nice job of marketing it with their commercials," says Mark Lardie, divisional merchandise manager, The Athlete's Foot Group, Atlanta.

"But having said that, the second-hottest product in the marketplace is the Nike Air Huarache running shoe, which has had no TV, just a print campaign," Lardie says.

Nike also plans to billboard Bo Jackson as he works through his rehabilitation program, "so that doesn't seem to be a problem at all for (Nike's) cross-trainer shoes," he says.

Converse, meanwhile, recently unveiled a $22 million ad campaign entitled "Converse. It's What's Inside that Counts," that features Larry Bird of the Boston Celtics, Bernard King of the Washington Bullets and Magic Johnson of the L.A. Lakers among its celebrity presenters.

Laurie Freeman is an Ann Arbor, Mich.-based business writer who reports on specialty retailing.

...ABSTRACT: teenagers still drive the athletic footwear business and set the tempo as far as shoe **fashion** is concerned. Retailers say that what really seems to drive sales of specific shoes are...

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4/7,K/3 (Item 1 from file: 476)
DIALOG(R)File 476:Financial Times Fulltext

0010073325 A19991110186-143-FT
SURVEY - KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT: IT system keeps lollipop maker in touch with
taste CASE STUDY: CHUPA CHUPS
GEOFF NAIRN
Financial Times, Surveys KNM1 ED, P 3
Wednesday, November 10, 1999

TEXT:
Whether a company knows it or not, knowledge management is at the heart of
its business - even if that business is one as seemingly simple as manufacturing lollipops.

This realisation led Chupa Chups, the Spanish confectionery company, to recently invest in a new IT system based on Lotus Notes technology that is
designed to share information and better manage corporate knowledge.

"With this solution, the Chupa Chups group seeks to implant a powerful knowledge management application," says Xavier del Sol, corporate IT director at Chupa Chups.

Making lollipops and exporting them to 160 countries is big business. The
Chupa Chups group sells more than 4bn lollipops every year and in 1998 had
revenues of Pta71bn (Dollars 490m), with nine out of every 10 Chupa Chups
lollipops sold outside Spain.

The Chupa Chups brand and the famous daisy-shaped wrapper logo - designed
30 years ago by Spanish surrealist Salvador Dali - are recognised around
the world. While the group has expanded into the production, distribution

and sales of other sweet products, lollipops are still its best selling line and the company knows better than to tamper with a winning formula.

According to the company's official history, the original idea for the Chupa Chups lollipop dates back to the 1950s when sweets in Spain were little more than sticky balls of candied sugar. Enric Bernat, the company's founder, thought up a system which would do way with the inconvenience of children dirtying their hands when eating sweets.

The revolution lay in the wooden stick - later replaced by plastic - and Chupa Chups lollipops proved an instant success.

Despite the unrivalled brand recognition enjoyed by the Chupa Chups lollipop, the company is well aware of the need to innovate to ensure its 40-year-old brand remains fresh and relevant to today's consumers. The lollipop is therefore now offered in more than 50 flavours to cater for the most exotic of tastes - lychee being one of the more unusual flavours.

The company has also devised novel promotional campaigns to back up its traditional dependence on advertising. These "below the line" campaigns aim to ensure that Chupa Chups lollipops are seen in the mouths of leading **celebrities** at high- **profile** cultural events such as the Venice Film Festival and **fashion** shows - Giorgio Armani is reportedly a Chupa Chups fan. The company has also established a fan club and web site for its **consumers** .

Outside its traditional lollipop business, Chupa Chups recently established a sister brand, Crazy Planet, which aims to serve as an umbrella for new products and communication campaigns aimed at children and teenagers. The company has also made its first moves into the adult confectionery market with the Smint brand of small mints.

To help in this constant search for original ways to promote the Chupa Chups brand, and expand into new markets, the company decided to invest in its new Lotus Notes system. The aim is to help ideas circulate more freely and so better exploit the knowledge of its 1,500 employees scattered around the world - Chupa Chups has factories in five countries and a presence in more than 160.

In January this year, Chupa Chups signed a contract with Lotus covering 500

licences for Notes "clients" to be installed on desktop PCs as well as the
notebook computers used by salespeople in the field.

Notes is perhaps the best known in a category of products known as "groupware" which started life as simple e-mail programs but have grown to
become important tools for sharing information in various forms: web pages,
diary schedules, files and documents.

Chupa Chups' experience with Notes has mirrored this evolution. It started
using Notes in 1996 as a simple e-mail program running on one server.
Today, the group has 13 Notes servers installed in France, Germany, Mexico,
Russia and the US and the software is used to do far more than just send
e-mails.

"Lotus Notes is our strategic tool for sharing information both with our
remote sales network in those countries where our products are present and
with our subsidiary companies," says Xavier del Sol. He hopes Notes will
evolve from being seen primarily as a means of sharing corporate
information to a potent knowledge management application.
The technology is just a means to an end, however, and in the case of Chupa
Chups, the end is to better exploit its "intellectual capital", meaning the
thoughts and ideas of its employees. The aim is to use technology to
stimulate a knowledge-sharing culture capable of producing ideas as
original as that which led to the first Chupa Chups lollipop 40 years
ago.

Geoffrey Nairn

1999

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Outside its traditional lollipop business, Chupa Chups recently established
a sister brand, Crazy Planet, which...

Kashuk
on a line of professional cosmetics. Also, acclaimed designer Philippe Starck
will introduce an exclusive line in 2001.

"Only visionaries take quantum leaps and that's how Target has developed a
hip image," Mossimo said. "This is a great marriage because it combines
our
lifestyle vision, marketing philosophy and design with Target's merchandising
expertise."

Mossimo has gained a national reputation for innovation and style with
his
fashionable , contemporary **clothing** for men and women. He launched his
business in 1987 by selling his unique collection out of his garage. This
home enterprise eventually evolved into MOSSIMO, Inc., a well-known **fashion**
label with cutting-edge designs that are popular with **celebrities** and other
high- **profile** **consumers** .

"Target has sparked the next big evolution in retail -- teaming powerful
brands with powerful retailers -- Mossimo has done the same with fashion,"
said Robert Margolis, Chairman & CEO of Cherokee, Inc., who introduced Target
Stores to Mossimo. "My goal in bringing the two together was to infuse a
true
collaboration of style, design and culture into the industry."

About Target Stores

Target Stores gives more than $1 million a week to communities in which
it
does business. Since it was founded in 1962, Target has contributed 5 percent
of its federally taxable income to its communities through grants, special
programs and team member donations.

Minneapolis-based Target Stores is an upscale discount retailer. It is
the largest division of Target Corporation (NYSE: TGT), one of the nation's
leading retailers, and currently operates 921 stores in 45 states nationwide.
To learn more about Target Stores, visit the Target web site at
http://www.target.com

SOURCE Target Stores

4/7,K/4 (Item 1 from file: 613)
DIALOG(R)File 613:PR Newswire

00392864 20000810TO058 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)
Allstarlineup.Com Capitalizes on Thriving Online Sports And Entertainment Memorabilia Market
PR Newswire
Thursday, August 10, 2000 09:01 EDT
WORD COUNT: 701

TEXT:
Specialized Collectibles Website "Lines Up" Exclusive
Agreements with Magic Johnson, Pamela Anderson and Pedro Martinez

TORONTO, Aug. 10 /CNW-PRN/ - AllStarLineup.com, expected to be the largest online collectibles website specializing in both sports and entertainment collectibles, has established exclusive memorabilia rights with a number of high- **profile** **celebrities** , including basketball legend Magic Johnson and superstar Pamela Anderson. The company has also secured an endorsement deal with two-time Cy Young award-winner Pedro Martinez, with an exclusive memorabilia contract beginning in December, 2000. Launching later this month, AllStarLineup.com is set to become the ultimate online site for sports and entertainment collectibles, featuring thousands of 100 percent guaranteed authentic items from countless athletes and celebrities.

"What makes us unique from competitors and other dot-com companies is our dedication to both the online and offline channels as well as the consumer and wholesale markets," says Philip Plotnick, President and CEO, AllStarLineup.com. "In addition to providing authentic and highly sought-after merchandise, we are establishing exclusive memorabilia contracts, becoming the only source of autographed products for those stars. To date, we have already secured contracts with a number of high-profile personalities as well as initial funding - demonstrating significant support for our site by celebrities, and confidence by investors."

Positioned For Success - 50% of Collectors To Go Online in 2000
Established in November 1999, AllStarLineup.com, has secured its initial

round of private placement funding and is currently seeking additional funding to enhance its marketing programs and site development. The funds will also help secure additional contracts with athletes and celebrities. With its wide range of merchandise, one-of-a-kind products and the fact that 50 percent of collectors are expected to go online in 2000(x), AllStarLineup.com is well positioned to capitalize on the growing Internet collectibles market, anticipating sales revenue of USD $20 million by 2001.

(x)Pennsylvania PA-based Unity Marketing,
1998 The Internet Collecting Boom Survey

AllStarLineup.com provides consumers, retailers and distributors with some of the most prized Hollywood and sport collectibles in the marketplace. The company has also established exclusive athlete and celebrity contracts, allowing fans and resellers access to unique, original and never-before-seen merchandise from their favorite stars. Visitors will be able to view signings of products in "real time" via live webcasts - ensuring authenticity as well as allowing for personalized items. The site will also feature chat rooms, games, sweepstakes and collectors' news and tips, making AllStarLineup.com the one-stop destination for both the collector and fan.

Legendary basketball player Earvin "Magic" Johnson is the most recent athlete to sign a worldwide exclusive memorabilia contract with the company. "This agreement means that my fans will receive 100 percent guaranteed authentic merchandise - allowing them to own a true piece of sports history," says Johnson.

Market Experiences Phenomenal Growth

Pennsylvania PA-based Unity Marketing reports in its 1999 Collectibles Industry Report that the collectibles industry has experienced a steady 10 percent annual growth rate over 5 years. Additionally, in Unity Marketing's 1998 survey, The Internet Collecting Boom, over the previous three years, collectors quickly turned to online resources to buy, sell or trade collectibles, or to gain information about their collections. In 1998,

online
collectors spent 34 percent more than their offline counterparts, and this
number is expected to grow tremendously as 50% of collectors are predicted to
go online in 2000.

AllStarLineup.com is continuing to expand its athlete and celebrity roster. The company has also secured exclusive memorabilia contracts with All-Star pitcher Ramon Martinez as well as online endorsement and memorabilia contracts with hockey legend Bobby Orr and All-Star first baseman Sean Casey.

Based in Toronto, Canada, AllStarLineup.com, a division of WCInet Inc., is set to provide collectors with the widest range of guaranteed authentic **merchandise** from hundreds of athletes and **celebrities** . The company is also the original source of supply for exclusive athlete and celebrity memorabilia through traditional and online channels for distributors, retailers, and **consumers** . For more information about the company's products and services please visit www.AllStarLineup.com.

SOURCE AllStarLineup.com
CONTACT: or to arrange an interview with Philip Plotnick, please contact: Ian Lifshitz, Melanie Rego or Danielle Gliddon at: Concepts Inc. Public Relations, Tel: 416 340-1000; Fax: 416 340-1100; e-mail: ilifshitz@conceptsinc.com.

2000

TEXT:
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please visit www.AllStarLineup.com...

4/7,K/5 (Item 2 from file: 613)
DIALOG(R)File 613:PR Newswire

00301215 20000329MNW009 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)
Target Stores Partners with Visionary Designer Mossimo Giannulli
PR Newswire
Wednesday, March 29, 2000 11:05 EST
WORD COUNT: 514

TEXT:
MINNEAPOLIS, March 29 /PRNewswire/ - Target Stores today announced a partnership with top fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli to create an exclusive line of contemporary apparel for the family that is young and fresh in attitude, but ageless in design.

Widely regarded as one of the most exciting fashion designers in the industry, Mossimo's creative passion and flair will contribute to Target's image as a fashion destination. Appealing to the fashion-forward consumer, Mossimo's current designs can be seen in high-end specialty stores and customized in-store shops. The new line at Target is expected to be in stores in 2001.

"Mossimo's distinctive designs are popular among our fashion-savvy guests," said Bob Ulrich, chairman and chief executive officer for Target Corporation. "We have great admiration for Mossimo's creativity and vision and are excited to partner with him and share his work with our guests."

The partnership with Mossimo epitomizes Target's philosophy and matches Mossimo's vision that good design can be a part of everyday life. With the announcement, Target continues to deliver on its promise to provide guests with a constant flow of fresh ideas. Though this is the first apparel partnership, Target has recently collaborated with renowned architect Michael Graves on a line of home merchandise, and celebrity makeup artist Sonia

CONTACT: Carolyn Aberman, Manager, Publicity and Public Relations of
Target
Stores, 612-304-1820, Mossimo Giannulli, Chairman, Mossimo, Inc.,
949-797-0200, or Chad A. Jacobs of Integrated Corporate Relations,
Inc.,
203-222-9013
Web site: http://www.target.com

2000

...s merchandising
expertise."

Mossimo has gained a national reputation for innovation and style with his **fashionable** , contemporary **clothing** for men and women. He launched his business in 1987 by selling his unique collection out of his garage. This home enterprise eventually evolved into MOSSIMO, Inc., a well-known **fashion** label with cutting-edge designs that are popular with **celebrities** and other high- **profile** **consumers** .

"Target has sparked the next big evolution in retail -- teaming powerful brands with powerful retailers...

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DIALOG(R)File 16:Gale Group PROMT(R)

05790043 Supplier Number: 50280068 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)
HIP-HOP MEETS HIGH FASHION
Weisman, Melissa A.
WWD, p5
August 24, 1998
TEXT:
NEW YORK -- What do a roomful of straightlaced Cartier executives and the tiny, blond-wigged rap artist Lil' Kim have in common? Not much, except a taste for expensive merchandise and good publicity.

That's one reason Lil' Kim, dressed in stiletto heels and a Lycra minidress -- cleavage included -- and the 151-year-old jewelry house got along so famously when Cartier's Trinity ring celebrated its 75th anniversary one night last May.

"I'm here because I talk about Cartier in my songs," said Lil' Kim, brushing her hair back and posing for the camera yet one more time. "I dig this stuff."

An artist like Lil' Kim -- who raps that she used to wear Dolce & Gabbana until every other woman started wearing it and that she goes "shopping at Bloomingdale's for Prada bags" in her album "Hard Core" -- can be a valuable promotional tool for the houses she mentions in her songs.

Versace, Gucci and Armani are just some of the design houses that have invited rap and hip-hop artists to attend their media-covered parties and **fashion** shows and to wear their clothes for nothing in the hopes of attracting new **consumers** . In exchange, the artists get to stand before the cameras at high- **profile** , **fashion** -driven events and become social **celebrities** .

According to many artists in the rap world, Notorious BIG began the trend back in 1994. In the single "Hipnotize" from his posthumous album "Life After Death," he said certain kinds of ladies wear DKNY, but "Miami D.C. prefer Versace." He was fatally shot in Los Angeles in 1997.

His legacy lives on as artists continue to express the importance of status through expensive labels. Case and Foxy Brown set the tone for their song "Touch Me Tease Me" from the soundtrack of the movie "The Nutty Professor" by referring to Isaac Mizrahi and Dolce & Gabbana in the opening lyrics, and in his hit song "Gettin' Jiggy Wit It," Will Smith says that wearing Prada and DKNY is the cool thing to do.

"When you're a rap artist, you want to stand out," explains 23-year-old Jay-Z, who mentions a sexy girl wearing Versace pants in the single "(Always Be My) Sunshine."

"That's part of the whole perception you create. So you start looking for upscale things."

Many of these artists use upscale designer labels to define personal taste and social aspirations. But according to radio personality D.J. Funkmaster Flex, a rapper has one other motive.

"When a rapper writes his lyrics," explains Flex, who was the deejay for Ted Fields' Fourth of July party in East Hampton,"he writes them with another rapper in mind. So they're trying to up each other."

Andy Hilfiger, vice president of Tommy Jeans and brother of Tommy Hilfiger, remembers when rap artists started mentioning the Tommy Hilfiger label.

"Tommy and I were coming back from Hong Kong in 1992, and Tommy pointed to these guys in the airport and I said, `Hey, it's Grand Puba.' So we met them, invited them up to our showroom and gave them some clothes.

Then before we knew it, the songs were saying, `Girbaud hanging baggy, Hilfiger on the top, knapsack on my back, 'cause that's just my flavor opts.' "

Other, more exclusive, fashion houses have since recognized the benefits of dealing with rap and hip-hop artists. Giorgio Armani got to know the Fugees in 1995, following their concert at the New Music Seminar in New York. After the performance, the group asked about getting free clothes for appearances and videos. Armani complied.

When the soul singer D'Angelo requested Armani clothes for the cover of his 1995 album "Brown Sugar," it was the start of a meaningful relationship between designer and performer.

The album went platinum, and Armani hit the promotional jackpot. Rap music, evidently, was the next frontier for promoting clothes; Armani already had made his mark in Hollywood, dressing the actors and actresses who preened before the TV cameras at Oscar time.

In 1996, D'Angelo attended Armani's men's show in Milan and that night performed at a party at the designer's home. Several months later, the Fugees wore Armani to the MTV music awards. When they accepted a Grammy in 1997 for rap album of the year, they were outfitted head to toe in Armani.

And the beat goes on. In the September issue of Jane magazine, Fugees singer Lauryn Hill stars in a six-page spread in which she wears Emporio Armani exclusively.

"I have a relationship with many bands," said Armani in a written statement, "from the Fugees and Wallflowers in the U.S. to Eric Clapton in the U.K., to many Italian artists like Laura Pausini and Eros Ramazzotti. These represent my precise desire to form a contact with the public and, in particular, a young public. The young are our future, both in social and business terms. It is important for fashion to take that into account."

Taking that into account means recognizing that hip-hop and rap have become more than just a fad.

"Rap is the music of the millennium," said 27-year-old Sean (Puffy) Combs, head of Bad Boy Entertainment, "and rap stars are the barometers of fashion." To that end, the singer, producer and music executive will be launching his own apparel line for spring under his given name, Sean John.

Not only do these artists reflect fashion, but they become part of its fabric, too. Combs, who dedicated his cover song "I'll Be Missing You" to the memory of Gianni Versace at the 1998 World Music Awards, has developed

a close relationship with Donatella Versace; she flew him to Paris for her first couture show in July, and he often wears the clothes she gives him.

"She's one of the designers I really like, along with Calvin Klein -- his stuff is very clean and sexy," said Combs

Other designers, such as Gucci, are jumping onto the rap bandwagon. For the past few years Gucci has preferred a Mod and rock 'n' roll feel for the catwalk, but this year's men's wear show in Milan was clearly about glam hip-hop.

The closing rap tune on the runway, "Gucci Guy," talked about how the man who wears Gucci isn't the same as all the rest. The song was a hit, and for some time there was speculation that Combs was responsible for its creation. But it was Dame Lee who sang it, and Tomandandy -- a bicoastal music company that creates music for films, advertisements and fashion shows -- that wrote and produced it. Tomandandy plans to release the single in the near future under its label and is working on new music for Gucci's women's show in New York this fall.

But as exclusive fashion labels find their way into rap lyrics, their mystique slowly wears thin.

"Everybody and their mama has Versace, whether it's a hat or underwear," said F-Sharp, director of Mix Show Radio at Roc-A-Fella Records, the label under which Jay-Z is signed. "Anybody can get it, and you know Jay-Z's fashion-forward. He doesn't like to stick in that crowd that follows the fad."

Instead, Jay-Z has taken to wearing Iceberg, a label he said he likes because "the sizes are cool." "Dolce & Gabbana you can't fit in, 'cause we like our clothes baggy," explained Jay-Z. "Prada -- now that Versace is so commercial -- is the new thing, the new step up. Dolce & Gabbana is too tight for guys, but for girls, the D&G T-shirts are nice when they wear their hair up with shades. And DKNY, that's not status."

For rap music fans, keeping up with the Jay-Z's can be costly. Inner-city kids who consider these artists role models can't always afford the real thing. So will a bootleg do the trick?

"If you can't afford it, stay within your means," insisted Jay-Z. "Don't get fakes. No one's saying you have to get it. You know, the group TLC sang this song that went: `Don't go chasing after waterfalls; stick to the rivers and the lakes that you're used to.' That's what I mean."

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DIALOG(R)File 20:Dialog Global Reporter

12334795 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)
Canadian startup AllStarLineup.com capitalizes on thriving online sports and entertainment memorabilia market
CANADA NEWSWIRE
August 10, 2000

Specialized Collectibles Website "Lines Up" Exclusive Agreements with Magic Johnson, Pamela Anderson and Pedro Martinez

TORONTO, Aug. 10 /CNW/ - Canadian startup AllStarLineup.com, expected to be the largest online collectibles website specializing in both sports and entertainment collectibles, has established exclusive memorabilia rights with a number of high- **profile** **celebrities** , including basketball legend Magic Johnson and superstar Pamela Anderson. The company has also secured an endorsement deal with two-time Cy Young award-winner Pedro Martinez, with an exclusive memorabilia contract beginning in December, 2000. Launching later this month, AllStarLineup.com is set to become the ultimate online site for sports and entertainment collectibles, featuring thousands of 100 percent guaranteed authentic items from countless athletes and celebrities.

"What makes us unique from competitors and other dot-com companies is our dedication to both the online and offline channels as well as the consumer and wholesale markets," says Philip Plotnick, President and CEO, AllStarLineup.com. "In addition to providing authentic and highly sought-after merchandise, we are establishing exclusive memorabilia

contracts, becoming the only source of autographed products for those stars. To date, we have already secured contracts with a number of high-profile personalities as well as initial funding - demonstrating significant support for our site by celebrities, and confidence by investors."

Positioned For Success - 50% of Collectors To Go Online in 2000

Established in November 1999, AllStarLineup.com, has secured its initial round of private placement funding and is currently seeking additional funding to enhance its marketing programs and site development. The funds will also help secure additional contracts with athletes and celebrities. With its wide range of merchandise, one-of-a-kind products and the fact that 50 percent of collectors are expected to go online in 2000(x), AllStarLineup.com is well positioned to capitalize on the growing Internet collectibles market, anticipating sales revenue of USD $20 million by 2001.

(x)Pennsylvania PA-based Unity Marketing, 1998 The Internet Collecting Boom Survey

AllStarLineup.com provides consumers, retailers and distributors with some of the most prized Hollywood and sport collectibles in the marketplace. The company has also established exclusive athlete and celebrity contracts, allowing fans and resellers access to unique, original and never-before-seen merchandise from their favorite stars. Visitors will be able to view signings of products in "real time" via live webcasts - ensuring authenticity as well as allowing for personalized items. The site will also feature chat rooms, games, sweepstakes and collectors' news and tips, making AllStarLineup.com the one-stop destination for both the collector and fan.

Legendary basketball player Earvin "Magic" Johnson is the most recent athlete to sign a worldwide exclusive memorabilia contract with the company. "This agreement means that my fans will receive 100 percent guaranteed authentic merchandise - allowing them to own a true piece of

sports history," says Johnson.
Market Experiences Phenomenal Growth
Pennsylvania PA-based Unity Marketing reports in its 1999 Collectibles Industry Report that the collectibles industry has experienced a steady 10 percent annual growth rate over 5 years. Additionally, in Unity Marketing's 1998 survey, The Internet Collecting Boom, over the previous three years, collectors quickly turned to online resources to buy, sell or trade collectibles, or to gain information about their collections. In 1998, online collectors spent 34 percent more than their offline counterparts, and this number is expected to grow tremendously as 50% of collectors are predicted to go online in 2000.

AllStarLineup.com is continuing to expand its athlete and celebrity roster. The company has also secured exclusive memorabilia contracts with All- Star pitcher Ramon Martinez as well as online endorsement and memorabilia contracts with hockey legend Bobby Orr and All-Star first baseman Sean Casey.

Based in Toronto, Canada, AllStarLineup.com, a division of WCInet Inc., is set to provide collectors with the widest range of guaranteed authentic **merchandise** from hundreds of athletes and **celebrities** . The company is also the original source of supply for exclusive athlete and celebrity memorabilia through traditional and online channels for distributors, retailers, and **consumers** . For more information about the company's products and services please visit www.AllStarLineup.com.

/For further information: or to arrange an interview with Philip Plotnick, please contact: Ian Lifshitz, Melanie Rego or Danielle Gliddon at: Concepts Inc. Public Relations, Tel: (416) 340-1000; Fax: (416) 340-1100; e-mail: ilifshitz(at)conceptsinc.com./ 09:01 ET

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